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Executive Order 11508
Real Property Survey

of

The Fairbanks Research Station
Federal Highway Administration
Department of Transportation
Langley, Virginia

on

August 13, 1970

by

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Property Management and Disposal Service
General Services Administration
7th and D Streets, SW.
Washington, DC 20407

September 28, 1970

AREA DATA

The subject site is located about 9 miles northwest of the center of Washington, DC, in Fairfax County, Virginia, and is bounded by the George Washington Memorial Parkway on the north, Virginia State Highway 193 near its intersection with State Route 123 on the south, the Central Intelligence Agency facility on the east and by private ownerships and Turkey Run on the west.

The property is near the communities of Langley, and Mc Lean and until 12 or 15 years ago this general area consisted of open country with small farms, some scattered home sites and a few clusters of housing dispersed about the countryside.

Today this area is considered prime suburban home site land. Developers have been acquiring large tracts for subdivisions; whole communities are being created. Because of its natural beauty, its proximity to the city and the availability of good roads, this area has been attracting a more affluent population with prestige homes; many selling in the \$40,000 to \$75,000 range and higher.

The Capital Beltway (Rte. 495) by-passes this property about two miles to the west. This area is accessible from the city by two dual highways, the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the Dolley Madison Highway (VA. Rte. 123).

LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS

The subject property consists of approximately 361 acres of land. It is improved with a 2-story and basement brick industrial type structure, a 2-story and basement annex of similar construction and a brick constructed water tower. The tract is further improved with a macadam roadway, extending from the south entrance off Virginia State Highway 193 to the north entrance off the George Washington Parkway. Fencing and all utility service lines except gas are on the property. The gas lines are available at the south entrance to the property.

The facility is known as the Fairbanks Highway Research Station, (Bureau of Public Roads), of the Federal Highway Administration. The main structure was designed primarily for laboratory and scientific testing purposes. The annex was constructed as a boiler plant to accommodate a large complex of buildings; however, since no other buildings were ever built, the large boilers have been replaced by smaller ones and the resulting space gained is utilized for testing and laboratory purposes. The station originally provided its own source of water; however, the water service is now furnished by the county. The original water tower is no longer in use. The sewerage system is connected to the disposal facilities of the Central Intelligence Agency.

A staff of approximately 175 employees, primarily professional and technical personnel, is based at this station. The mission of this station is to provide services for improving the designs, construction, traffic flow and safety of the nation's road network. These responsibilities are accomplished through "in house" functions and by means of contracts under the control and surveillance of the station.

Reportedly, only 6 percent of the functions that the Bureau of Public Roads is responsible for is accomplished by their staff on the premises, the balance being handled by contracts under the supervision of the station personnel. The vast discrepancy in the ratio of "in house" work versus the work accomplished under contract is less than ideal according to officials of the facility. The Federal Highway Administration has developed plans for the expansion of the station which, if implemented, would eventually utilize virtually all of the land, more than double the personnel, and increase the "in house" research capability considerably.

HISTORY

The Department of Commerce, then the parent agency of the facility, acquired about 582 acres of land in the years 1940-1941 and 1948 at a cost of \$332,652. The main building and annex were constructed at a cost of \$1,906,000. Roadways, water and sewerage systems amounted to \$127,000; and subsequent improvements to buildings were made at a cost of \$158,300.

In 1957 the Bureau of Public Roads of the Commerce Department transferred to the Central Intelligence Agency 131.56 acres of this property, and another 84 acres to the National Park Service. The land transferred to the Central Intelligence Agency now contains the Headquarters facility of that agency. The facility is managed completely by the General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service. In 1958 the original tract was further reduced by the conveyance of 4.64 acres of land to the Commonwealth of Virginia for road expansion, leaving 361 acres, more or less, under control of the Fairbanks Highway Research Station. In addition, the station permitted to the Central Intelligence Agency 30 acres for recreational purposes and 20 acres for parking and a heliport between the years 1960 and 1965. The Central Intelligence Agency is interested in obtaining permanent jurisdiction of these areas and certain other additional areas.

The two buildings on the land were constructed in the 1940's and were to be the first of a complex to house the functions of the Bureau of Public Roads. However, funds were not obtainable and the station was never fully developed as intended.

UTILIZATION FINDINGS

From a visual inspection of the property only 25 or 30 acres of the 361 acres appear to be utilized currently for their program. This consists of the area in the vicinity of the two main buildings, the parking lot, and a small isolated area for the aging of road samples. The two additional areas presently utilized by the Central Intelligence Agency are under 30-day revocable permits. The recreation field is located adjacent to the south entrance of the property and contains three ball diamonds. The parking lot is located about midway between the south entrance of the property and the building complex. This area is paved and fenced with access from the Fairbanks Station entrance road as well as from the Central Intelligence Agency roadway.

The remaining 280 acres are not being utilized. A sizeable portion of this acreage is mowed and maintained in a park-like manner and forms a backdrop for the approach road through the grounds to the

buildings area. A larger portion, however, is screened by trees and hidden from view of the visitor. Virtually all of this vacant land could be used to far greater advantage.

As mentioned earlier in this report, the Federal Highway Administration has very detailed plans developed for the utilization of nearly all of this station. It is understood that the Bureau of Public Roads has obtained approval for expanding their facilities, but appropriation of funds have not yet been forthcoming. The proposed plans provide for construction to take place over a period of 4 years with completion scheduled for 1974 at a total cost of \$21,950,000.

As of this report, the funding for the expansion program is still not available and no starting time for the commencement of the project can be anticipated.

EXCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the 330 acres of land not presently utilized (including the 50 acres under permit to CIA) be reported excess to the General Services Administration. The utilization requirements of the Federal Highway Administration, Central Intelligence Agency, and any other agencies would be carefully studied before any disposal (sale or exchange), as surplus property is contemplated.

HIGHEST AND BEST USE

The highest and best use for the subject property would be best served by its retention under Federal Government ownership to meet current and future expansion requirements of agencies for office and related buildings.

APPROXIMATE VALUE - \$3,100,000

The estimated value is based upon residential zoning of Fairfax County for one-acre lots. Discussions with County officials concerning alternate zonings indicate that approval of commercial zoning of the site is highly unlikely.

COMPATIBLE COMMUNITY USES

Except for the facilities of the Federal Highway Administration and the Central Intelligence Agency, the surrounding area is open country in character primarily developed for residential use with extensive parkland along the George Washington Parkway. However, the Federal activities are not considered incompatible with the area and additional construction would have no adverse impact on the community.

ANTICIPATED INTEREST

In addition to the Federal Highway Administration, Central Intelligence Agency and the National Park Service have expressed interest in this property for expansion of their respective facilities.

APPROVED:

(Signed) L. E. Nunnally

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Regional Director
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